

THE Anti-Slavery Reporter

PUBLISHED UNDER THE SANCTION OF THE
BRITISH AND FOREIGN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

Series 4.
Vol. XXVI., No. 3.

JUNE-JULY, 1906.

{ Gratis to
Subscribers.

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PUBLISHED AT THE OFFICES OF THE SOCIETY,

51, DENISON HOUSE, VAUXHALL BRIDGE ROAD, LONDON, S.W.

NEWNHAM, COWELL & GRIFFER, LTD., Printers, 75, Chiswell Street, London, E.C.

1906.

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The Anti-Slavery Reporter.

JUNE—JULY, 1906.

[The Editor, whilst grateful to all correspondents who may be kind enough to furnish him with information, desires to state that he is not responsible for the views stated by them, nor for quotations which may be inserted from other journals. The object of the REPORTER is to spread information, and articles are necessarily quoted which may contain views or statements for which their authors can alone be held responsible.]

The Congo Question.

THE Committee which was appointed to formulate proposals for carrying out the reforms proposed by the Commission of Enquiry has now issued its recommendations, which have been embodied in Decrees issued by the King-Sovereign in June. These deal with native occupation of land, and such questions as taxation, justice, the National Domain, etc. The composition of the Committee was not of a kind to inspire confidence or give hope of real reform, as, of the 14 members, eight were actually Congo officials and two others were closely connected with the King. The first Decree declares that the land belongs to the natives who "inhabit, cultivate or exploit it" according to local customs, but their rights are left to be determined by the Governor-General.

The Congo Reform Association, in a memorial addressed to the Foreign Office on this whole question, points out that this article is really meaningless, because the native is denied the rights of ownership over the products of the land, and trade is impossible for him under the system. In regard to taxation, it is professed that force is no longer to be used in the collection of rubber and the native soldiery are not to be armed with weapons of precision. On this it seems enough to say that the whole administration depends for its working upon the due supply of rubber being kept up, and if the forty hours' law were adhered to and force were withdrawn, so enormous a fall of the rubber output would result that the Congo régime must collapse. If the native is forbidden to trade, or to own the products of the soil, the system of forced rubber-collecting by black agents must be maintained.

M. Cattier, the distinguished Belgian jurist, in a criticism of the proposed reforms, emphasises the fact that many of the proposals of King Leopold's own Commission are disavowed or ignored. These omissions are more significant than the points which are dealt with by the Decrees. Thus, State exploitation is maintained in its entirety and the black sentries are not abolished.

The Commission found that the Judiciary was not independent of the Executive Government. But the Governor-General maintains the right to quash any proceedings if he considers that public and political interests demand it. The *Domaine de la Couronne* (four times the size of Great Britain) is maintained, and no reform of the State accounts is promised. In view of the maintenance of these abuses, the improvements in lesser matters cannot be considered of much value, especially when we remember that, in the past, humanitarian recommendations have usually remained on paper.

One clause seems specially designed to catch and convict the missionaries. It provides for a penalty of fine and imprisonment upon anyone who "makes an abusive use of his influence," "directly incites the natives not to fulfil their obligations," or "maliciously criticises the obligatory nature of the laws as to taxation."

The King's letter which accompanies the Decrees is a practical declaration of independence and disavowal of responsibility under the Berlin Act. He writes:—

"All the responsibilities and the organisation of a Government unfettered by other authority have been left to my care. The Congo is essentially a personal undertaking. There is no more legitimate or honourable right than that of reaping the fruit of one's own labour. The Powers accorded their good will to the birth of the new State, but not one was called upon to participate in my efforts; hence it follows that none has the right of intervention, which nothing could justify. . . . My rights in the Congo are indivisible; they are the product of personal labour and expense. You must miss no opportunity of proclaiming these rights; they alone can render possible and legitimate my bequest of the Congo to Belgium, which has no title but what reverts to her through my person."

This astonishing language will perhaps awaken the Powers to the danger of allowing the present state of things to continue, and of suffering the extravagant pretensions of King Leopold to go unchallenged.

An important White Paper has been published containing correspondence which has passed between our Government and Brussels on various phases of the Congo question.* The despatches give evidence of the clear and strong line of protest against the Congo system which our Government has adopted, but it is disappointing to find that the point on which the Foreign Secretary very properly laid great stress—the non-publication of the evidence given before the Commission of Enquiry—for which he argued in several letters, appears, for the present at any rate, to have been dropped, in view of the obstinate refusal of the Congo Government, on various pretexts, to accede to the request.

In the letter addressed by Sir E. Grey to the British Minister at Brussels on receipt of the Report, he described the system of labour taxation

* Africa, No. 1, 1906.

on the Congo as "open to the imputation of constituting a form of servitude differing in essence but little from actual slavery," and combated the view that compulsion is necessary to overcome the natural indolence of the native. He strongly condemned also the administration of the Concessionaire Companies. In the course of the correspondence, the Secretary of State had repeatedly to press for the Report of the Brussels Commission, pointing out that the abuses which were constantly brought to his notice made it urgently necessary that reforms should be announced and applied.

In regard to the publication of the evidence given before the Commission, the Congo Government declared that they were under no obligation, but had the sovereign right of decision in the matter. Sir E. Grey pointed out that full publicity had been promised, and that the conclusions of the Commissioners lacked the authority which the publication of the witnesses' depositions alone could give them. The Congo Government pleaded that publication would seem to accuse persons who could not defend themselves, and that it would enable the critics and enemies of the State to formulate fresh charges against its administration, persistently intimating that H.M. Government were instigated to make this request by Mr. Morel and the Congo Reform Association.

On May 3rd, Sir E. Grey instructed Sir A. Hardinge, our Minister at Brussels, to explain "that H.M. Government have in no way modified the view held by them and their predecessors, that the Powers, parties to the Berlin Act, have every right to take such steps as they may consider called for with a view to the due observance by the independent State of its obligations under that Act."

In reply, M. de Cuvelier denied that any Foreign Power or even the Powers collectively had a right to interfere with the internal administration of the Congo State, arguing that even on the assumption that the State were to establish slavery—a hypothetical case which Sir A. Hardinge had put—the other parties to the Berlin Act could not legally intervene. This seems to be a *reductio ad absurdum* of the Congo State's outrageous pretensions, which would, as Sir Arthur Hardinge pointed out, make the 6th Article of the Berlin Act meaningless. It is, however, quite in the spirit of King Leopold's extraordinary letter above referred to.

The Congo Reform Association has done well to translate and publish a *verbatim* report of the notable five days' debate in the Belgian House of Representatives in February last, for that debate gave clear evidence of the fact that there is a growing and important section of public opinion in Belgium which has been awakened by recent events to the abominations of the Congo régime, and that, in the words of M. Bertrand:

"To-day all just and generous minds are convinced that the system must be brought to a stop, because that which is at issue in this debate is not a

political question, not a vain party question ; it is in truth a question of justice and humanity."

M. Vandervelde, M. Lorand, and other convinced opponents of the Congo system arraigned it in eloquent and powerful language, but we especially note the attitude of such deputies as M. Beernaert, the ex-Minister of State, whose resolution was eventually carried, and of some of the Catholic representatives, such as M. Colfs and M. Helleputte. M. Beernaert, while paying tribute in courtly terms to the "grandeur of the conception" of the Congo State, spoke of the exploitation system as abominable, and said that forced labour "easily leads back to slavery under a new form, from which it differs but little."

"One must acknowledge with sorrow," he said, "but with truth, that the European, in playing the part of civiliser, which he attributes and confers upon himself, is not always very pleasant to look upon."

M. Colfs denounced the abuses revealed by the Commission Report in very strong terms, and declared that

"From 1895 onwards, the conspiracy against truth has been organised from top to bottom, under well-nigh unbelievable conditions, in order to hide the crimes which are committed in the Congo."

More than one of the speakers expressed their disbelief in the possibility of any reforms proposed by the Commission as at present constituted, and M. Vandervelde referred to the "eloquent and conclusive fact" that nothing had been done since the return of the Commissioners to improve the conditions, as showing that there is no intention of doing anything. His reasons for want of confidence in the Government M. Vandervelde expressed in these terms:

"I maintain that coercion is not necessary ; that a system of forced labour involves disastrous consequences ; and that, as long as it has not disappeared, some improvements may be brought about, some degrees of native suffering may be alleviated, but the evil will not have been destroyed in its root."

Another speaker, M. Lorand, spoke with equal plainness on this point :

"The abuses continue necessary and frequent, because they are the result of the system of government adopted by the Congo State. . . . What we have always fought is the system of exaggerated exploitation adopted by the Congo State. This fact is now established without possible doubt by the Report of the Commission of Inquiry."

Many striking extracts might be quoted from the speeches of those who took part in this debate, but these are enough to show the tone and temper which is beginning to characterise honest thinking men of all sections, and that language so bold and so true should be used in the Belgian Chamber is a most hopeful feature of the present situation.

A letter, now before us, which was written a few weeks ago by a Belgian gentleman to a member of the Committee of the Anti-Slavery Society, shows

how public opinion in Belgium has been changed by the Report of the Commission of Enquiry; the writer has hitherto been quite sceptical of the alleged outrages and hostile to the reform agitation. He writes that the publication of the Report caused a cry of indignation all over the country.

Describing the large interest of the State—i.e., the King—in the Concession Companies, the writer says:

"By the 'Domaine privé' and the 'Domaine de la Couronne,' the Sovereign held half of the Congo; by the aforesaid Companies he held the other half. All competition was suppressed; the whole Congo worked for the profit of one man and a few shareholders. The profits were gigantic. . . . I have seen the shares of the Abir (Anglo-Belgian India Rubber), for which the shareholders paid £12, go up to £1,100, and pay £80 dividend a year!! Everything was planned with a Satanic genius; the natives, reduced to a modern form of slavery, were obliged to deliver so many pounds of rubber; it was exacted with cruelty by agents who generally were but the scum of the population of their respective countries."

He considers that the Report of the Commission has given the death-blow to the Congo system of taxation, which is now condemned in Belgium. The reforms proposed are "simply preposterous."

Debates have taken place in both Houses of Parliament on the present state of the Congo question, and have given opportunity both to Sir Edward Grey in the Commons, and to Lord Fitzmaurice in the Lords, to make the position of the Government plain. As Lord Lansdowne said, the attitude of the Congo State has been unsatisfactory throughout, and he did not think it had ever been more unsatisfactory than at the present moment. The Congo Government are wont to boast of having abolished the Arab slave trade, but Lord Fitzmaurice quoted with approval the statement in the *Quarterly Review*, that the old Government of the slave traders had features which made it preferable to the present régime in many large districts in the Congo.

The Government were prepared to stand on their rights, including that of establishing Consular Courts in the State. We have treaty rights, and more than treaty rights. The Secretary of State emphasised the fact that the recent Decrees were accompanied by "a pronouncement of rights in which the Sovereign of the Congo State spoke less as a governor and more as if he were the owner of private property."

However valuable the reforms might appear on paper, Sir E. Grey recognises that the system is wrong, and a change is required. He stated that in view of the awakened interest in Belgium, he proposes to wait "and see what the autumn may bring forth," but, he added, amidst loud applause, "We cannot wait for ever."

The latest act of the Congo State authorities in bringing a charge of

criminal libel against Mr. Stannard, the missionary who has been prominent in denouncing the outrages which he has himself witnessed, will go far to fill up the cup of public indignation in this country against the continuing condition of things on the Congo. Mr. Stannard was detained at Coquilhatville, when on the eve of starting for England on leave, and his trial, originally fixed for May 8th, was postponed until June 15th. The prosecution has been instituted, it appears, under a law against "defamation." It will be remembered that Mr. Stannard gave important evidence before the Commission of Enquiry which incriminated a certain officer, Commandant Hagstrom, whose cruelties are notorious. This officer has been rewarded by promotion in the Congo State service.

The exceptional action which was taken by the British Foreign Office in deputing Vice-Consul Armstrong to act as counsel for Mr. Stannard's defence, in view of his bad state of health, and the difficulty of securing counsel, is highly significant.

The *Tribune Congolaise* has published a telegram, received by the Congo Free State, announcing that Mr. Stannard was sentenced on June 29th, by the Court at Coquilhatville, to pay a fine of 1,000 francs, and 1 franc damages.

Mr. Whiteside, another missionary connected with the Congo Balolo Mission, who has this year travelled with Mr. Stannard in the interior of the Abir territory, in districts practically unknown to any white men other than the Congo officials, has returned to England during the last few weeks, and has submitted a report of his journey to the Foreign Office.

This report states that after nearly nine year's experience of the Lolanga district, fifty miles north of Coquilhatville, Mr. Whiteside found the state of things early in this year worse than he had ever known them before; this in spite of the reforms promised by the Commission of Enquiry, and only two months after a visit from the Governor General. Mr. Whiteside describes the atrocious deeds of the native sentries, who raid and plunder, torture and murder the people and burn their villages, unhindered. With such rigour is the collection of rubber carried out, that the villages are left almost empty of inhabitants, while the people are out in the forest rubber-hunting; in one place the people have only four days free out of twenty-eight.

At a place called Iyonji, the men continually interrupted Mr. Stannard, who was trying to hold a service, by imploring the white men to "save them from rubber." Four days after this the missionaries re-visited Iyonji, and found that the sentries had taken a swift and barbarous vengeance on the inhabitants who had complained; in the fight that had resulted, two of the sentries were killed, the village was turned into a mass of smouldering ruins and the people had all fled.

Mr. Whiteside points out that the sentries do not commit outrages without instructions, but are paid and armed by the Abir Company. He writes:—

"The Government is also aware of the true state of affairs in this region. Commandant Hagstrom and other officials are continually travelling on the Abir steamers accompanied by many soldiers, and have abundant opportunities of seeing how the rubber is collected. The action of these Government officials is such as to impress everyone that they are mere auxiliaries of the Abir."

"I am fully convinced that the Governor General himself is aware of the true state of affairs. If not, Commandant Hagstrom and the police officials of the districts are criminally responsible for not putting an end to the above state of affairs."

Parliamentary.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, *May 24th.*

ZANZIBAR SLAVERY.

MR. J. W. WILSON asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he could give the number of slaves freed by the courts, under the decree of 1897, in Zanzibar and Pemba, respectively, in each of the years 1902, 1903, 1904, and 1905 (in continuation of Africa, No. 6, 1902); also the total of those where emancipation has been voluntarily granted and registered, or labour contracts officially drawn up and recognised by the courts; and, further, whether he will consider what steps can be taken to put an end to this period of transition and the existence of slavery in the Protectorate.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The number of slaves freed by the courts, under the decree of 1897, in Zanzibar and Pemba in 1903, is given in Africa, No. 14, 1904, which is the continuation of Africa, No. 6, 1902. The total of those whose emancipation has been voluntarily granted and registered for 1902 and 1903 will be found on page 6 of the same volume. A Report will be called for from His Majesty's Agent at Zanzibar as to whether there are any instances of labour contracts being officially drawn up and recognised by the courts. Details will at the same time be asked for the years 1904 and 1905. As the legal status of slavery has been abolished by the decree of 1897, which has worked so satisfactorily, as will appear by reference to Africa, No. 14, 1904, it does not appear that anything further could be more effective.

May 30th.

SLAVERY IN THE COAST-STRIP.

COLONEL WILLIAMS asked the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what steps are being taken to carry out the assurances that have been given

as to extending the policy of the abolition of the legal status of slavery to the 10-mile coast-strip of the East African Protectorate; whether they are aware of the decision of the Provincial Court of Mombasa of 25th April, 1898, whereby it was laid down that all slaves imported into the coast territories since the decree of 18th April, 1876, were illegally held in bondage; and whether a large proportion of the slaves now held in the territory have been imported since 1876.

The written reply is as follows:—The buying and selling of slaves in this strip of territory has been prohibited since 1890, and all persons born in it since 1900 have been born free; with the result that, as appears from a report received from the late Sir Donald Stewart, slavery has become almost nominal and is dying out. The Secretary of State has heard of the decision of the Mombasa Court to which the honourable and gallant Member draws attention. He is not aware that any slaves are held in contravention of it; but he will make inquiry of the Commissioner on the subject.

[We cannot but think these answers very unsatisfactory, and we feel sure that this matter of slavery in Zanzibar, islands and mainland, will not be allowed to rest. As Bishop Tucker writes: "Nearly ten years have passed by since Mr. Balfour stated on June 24th, 1897, that the Government were anxious to apply to Mombasa and the coast strip the measures that had already been applied to Zanzibar, and absolutely nothing has been done."—*Ed. Reporter.*]

July 5th.

PORTUGUESE SLAVERY.

SIR G. PARKER asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention had been drawn to allegations of slavery carried on in the islands of San Thomé and Príncipe, on the West Coast of Africa; and what steps he purposed to take to direct the attention of the Portuguese Government to the alleged practices.

SIR E. GREY.—The attention of the Portuguese Government has from time to time been called to the conditions under which labour is obtained for the islands of San Thomé and Príncipe. Mr. Nightingale, his Majesty's Consul for the Congo, recently paid a visit to the islands referred to for the purpose of inquiring into the matter, and a report from him on the subject is expected shortly.

In reply to a subsequent question, MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said:—Cocoa is, no doubt, one of the principal products of the islands, and is largely purchased by British merchants. I do not see that any steps can be taken respecting purchases of cocoa by British merchants.

July 10th.

THE SALE OF SLAVES IN MOROCCO.

MR. ASHLEY asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if the Sultan of Morocco had taken any steps to carry out the recommendation of

the Algeciras Conference that the public sale of slaves should be prohibited in his dominions; and whether he had any official information showing that a young black girl was recently sold in the city of Tangier, and that her father was unable to obtain any redress.

SIR E. GREY.—His Majesty's Government have so far received no information as to the steps taken by the Sultan of Morocco to carry out the recommendations of the Algeciras Conference that the public sale of slaves should be prohibited in his dominions. They are, however, in communication with his Majesty's Minister at Tangier, who has brought the subject to the attention of the Sultan's Government, and has received a reply stating that the Sultan has sent orders to all the authorities of the towns to put a stop to the sale into slavery of children born free. In reply to the second part of the question, no information has been received of the case of slave dealing mentioned.



Slave-Trading in Morocco.

THE following letter was sent on behalf of the Society to the Foreign Office, and has been formally acknowledged. The Anti-Slavery Societies of France and Italy have also been communicated with, and are giving attention to this matter; the latter Society has addressed a letter to the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs embodying the facts here stated:—

51, DENISON HOUSE,

VAUXHALL BRIDGE ROAD, S.W.,

LONDON, June 20th, 1906.

TO THE RIGHT HON. SIR EDWARD GREY, BART., M.P., ETC.

SIR,—In further reference to cases of slave-trading in Morocco, about which I had the honour to address letters to you in December and January last, I beg leave to inform you that my Committee has received information from one of its members, who was recently in Tangier, that a sale of slaves, among whom some white women and children were included, took place in a Fondak in Tangier in April last; the sale was reported in the local newspaper, *Al-Moghreb Al-Aksa*. I am to point out that as a Fondak is an enclosure providing accommodation for travellers and their animals, and the drivers of caravans congregate there, it is practically a public place, in the sense that an hotel is public, and I am respectfully to ask if representations can be made to the Moorish Government that these Fondaks should in future be regarded as public places, and that the sale of slaves should be prohibited in them, as it is already, by agreement with the Moorish Government, prohibited in open markets. The impression that such dealings in slaves have recently become more frequent and open is confirmed by some further facts

which have come to the knowledge of my Committee on the information of an Englishman who has for many years been resident in Morocco, and has a thorough knowledge of the country. This informant states that in travelling lately on a steamer up the coast of Morocco to Tangier, he saw at one of the ports twenty-four female slaves—adults and children—put on board his steamer, and it appeared from inquiries which he was able to make, that of these twenty-four, two were from Mogador, two from Saffi, and twenty from Mazagan; eighteen were en route to Fez, presumably travelling to old or new homes under existing conditions of domestic slavery, while six were to be sold at Tangier. Amongst these slaves he saw some actually white children, who, he states, had in all probability been sold by their mothers in exchange for food, the famine and distress being at that time very severe.

I beg respectfully on behalf of my Committee to request that the attention of His Majesty's Minister at Tangier may be called to these recent instances of slave-trading, and to ask that if possible the information should be conveyed to the Italian Minister now at the Court at Fez, with a view to his bringing these evils to the notice of His Majesty the Sultan, and securing his agreement to measures of reform.

I have, etc.,

(Signed) TRAVERS BUXTON,
Secretary.

REPLY.

FOREIGN OFFICE,
July 3, 1906.

SIR,—I have laid your letter of the 20th ultimo on the subject of slave-trading in Morocco before Secretary Sir E. Grey, who has caused a copy of it to be forwarded to His Majesty's Minister at Tangier for a report.

Sir E. Grey desires me to point out to you that His Majesty's Government are fully alive to the importance of checking the traffic of slaves in Morocco, and that they have for some time past been in communication with Mr. Lowther with the object of putting pressure upon the Moorish Government to discontinue the practice.

As a result, the Italian Minister to Morocco, when recently proceeding on a special mission to Fez, was requested by his colleagues at Tangier again to bring this matter to the notice of the Sultan, and to urge upon His Highness the adoption of more rigorous measures for the suppression of the slave trade.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) ERIC BARRINGTON.

The Secretary, Anti-Slavery Society.

The following *Central News* telegram from Tangier was published on July 3rd :—

"A typical Moorish scene was witnessed here to-day. A young black girl was recently brought to the city and sold as a slave. Her father arrived to-day from Rabat and discovered that his daughter had been bought by a former Bashaw of Arzila. The father, much distressed, is now perambulating the streets proclaiming his wrongs and publicly demanding the restoration of his daughter and the protection of the authorities. Such scenes naturally cause excitement and resentment among the Europeans here, because the Sultan has several times promised to abolish slavery throughout Morocco."

Slave Trade Papers.*

THIS volume of papers, relating to African slave trade and slavery and the import of arms and liquor, is published annually in accordance with the terms of the Brussels Act. It contains a great many lists and statistics, but little information about slavery that we have not already had. We find nothing from German East Africa except lists of freedom papers granted, and of a few convictions for slave trading by sea recorded in 1904.

The report of the Zanzibar International Maritime Bureau for 1905 is that the improvement reported last year is maintained; the owners of trading vessels "seem to have quite definitely given up the illegal traffic in slaves which was formerly an element in their prosperity, and during the past year no charge of slave trading has been brought against them." Further, no attempts upon the liberty of the natives have been reported to the Bureau.

The Commander-in-Chief on the Cape Station reported to the Admiralty in March, 1905, that "no conclusive evidences of activity in the slave trade on the East Coast of Africa were noticed by His Majesty's ships on that division of the Cape Station during the year 1904."

ITALIAN TERRITORY.

One of the longest reports in this volume is that from the Italian colony of Erythrea upon action which was against taken slavery during the year 1904. A large number of cases is described in detail, where the circumstances have been investigated and the slaves declared free. In all, 104 slaves have been freed, as against 64 in the previous year. Most of those who were not fugitives from the other side of the frontier preferred to remain and work for their former masters. The report concludes with the following remarks :—

"It is clear that the humanitarian work undertaken by the Government of the Colony is known even in the most distant regions, and this circumstance is enough to show that it has effected its purpose. It proves also that, although

* *Documents relatifs à la Répression de la Traite des Esclaves*, Brussels, 1906.

the name of *slave* is still used, it is no longer possible to enslave anyone within the Colony. In fact, if, in spite of the fatigues and dangers to which they are exposed, certain slaves elude the vigilance of their masters and succeed in escaping through wild tracts of country to find a refuge with us, it cannot be supposed that people can still be reduced to slavery in the Colony itself, where our humanitarian work is more known than elsewhere, and where the watchfulness of the authorities is constant and their protection immediate. . . . We may affirm, without fear of contradiction, that except for a few special cases where Government intervention has been sought, the social plague from which the Colony suffered has healed up of itself. In fact, the former slaves, feeling their safety assured, and conscious of their rights, no longer experience the need of applying for official recognition of their liberty; the former masters on their side, equally affected by this new sentiment of human solidarity and averted by the threats of the Government, recognise of their own accord the new state of things which we have established, and treat their former slaves with humanity as free servants who choose to remain with them rather than to wander about a world unknown to them, where their inexperience would expose them to other calamities, sometimes more terrible than slavery itself."

It is claimed, then, for the Government of the Colony, that the difficult slavery problem has been solved in the best manner without violence or precipitate haste, by a steady deliberate process. The former slave knows that he can no longer be subjected to cruel punishments, while the master knows that if he wants to retain his services he must treat him well. The result will be that servile labour will, before long, altogether come to an end.

From Italian Somaliland an agreement of last year between the Commissioner and the Mullah is quoted, in which the latter solemnly engages, together with his subjects, to prevent dealings in slaves and the introduction of slaves into the country.

FRENCH WEST AFRICA.

We referred last year to the state of the French law against slavery on land, and the defects in it which rendered the laws of 1831 and 1848 against the slave trade inapplicable in some cases and powerless to touch slave traders. Magistrates in West Africa have been reduced to resort to various expedients in order to prevent acts of slave trading going unpunished. The difficulty was brought to a head last year by the decision of the Court of Cassation in June, and we are glad to see that this has led to legislation to put the matter right.

M. Clémentel, the late Minister of the Colonies, stated the facts of the case in a letter to the President of the Republic, dated the 12th of December 1905, submitting to him a Bill of the same date, of which the chief clauses (Articles I. and II.) run as follows:—

I.—"Whoever shall, within the territories of French West Africa and French Congo, enter into an agreement having for its object to

deprive a third person of his liberty, whether for consideration or not, shall be punished by sentence of imprisonment of from two to five years, and by a fine of from 500 to 1,000 francs. Attempts will be regarded as crimes. Money, goods, and other objects or value received in accordance with the agreement or as earnest of an agreement will be confiscated."

II.—The same penalty will attach to the act of introducing into the territories of French West Africa and French Congo persons intended to be the objects of the aforesaid agreement, or to the act of exporting or attempting to export from these territories, persons under contract for other countries."

In his covering letter, M. Clémentel, referring to the inadequacy of the existing laws on the subject, stated that the law of 1831 only related to maritime slave trade, and the much more general law of 1848 was powerless against persons who were not French citizens, having as its only sanction the loss of French citizenship.

The letter proceeded :—

"These provisions were doubtless sufficient at a period when our possessions on the West Coast of Africa consisted of a few landing-places, and when only the maritime slave trade was to be feared. Things are very different to-day. Our authority now extends into the interior of the African continent over vast tracts of country; elsewhere, if the infamous traffic which is unanimously condemned by civilised humanity, has now for a long time ceased to be carried on by sea, thanks to the active watchfulness of all nations, certain recent events have unfortunately shown that it may still exist, in a disguised form it is true, in certain remote countries, where the control of our Administrators can only with difficulty make itself felt by reason of the distance and the difficulty of communications. It is indispensable, in my opinion, to remedy as soon as possible the defect which exists in our legislation, in order that we may be able to reach acts of slave trading done by land, in the same way as those which come under the law of 1831.

"The provision which I have drawn up for this end strikes at every act, under whatever form it presents itself, done with intent to dispose of the liberty of a person against his will, if there is any contract or even steps preliminary to a contract.

"It is far-reaching in its extent, it is applicable in our colonies and territories of French West Africa and the Congo, to all such persons, French citizens, French subjects, and foreigners as may have directly or indirectly participated in an act of the slave trade.

"It also strikes at anyone who, without having completed the act of sale, takes persons with him outside French territory with intent to dispose of them abroad."

From French Congo a decree of October, 1904, is published controlling the Arab trade caravans, in order to discover and check dealings in slaves and imposing a tax on all persons in the caravans.

GOLD COAST.

The annual report for 1904 of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast states that slave dealing is still prevalent, but is being gradually suppressed.

TURKEY.

A letter from the Belgian Minister at Constantinople, dated February last, states that for some years past the traffic in negro slaves to Constantinople has completely ceased.

Lord Cromer on the Soudan.

IN our last issue we drew attention to Lord Cromer's report on Egypt and the Soudan for 1905, and the information which it contained on the slavery question in those countries. Some further extracts from this most interesting Paper, for which we had not space in the previous number, will, we feel sure, be of interest to our readers.

In his introductory remarks, Lord Cromer again remarks on the falsification of the prophecy of Gordon and Stewart, that the Soudan would always be a useless possession.

"The main utility of the Soudan . . . is derived from the fact that the Nile runs through the country, and that complete control over the river throughout its course is a matter of vital importance to the Egyptians. . . . Incidentally, however, in the execution of a policy which is imposed on the Egyptians and their rulers as an economic and political necessity, the question of the local development of the Soudan acquires an importance in itself, irrespective of the reasons which originally forced it into prominence."

Lord Cromer then dwells on the stage of development which has been reached, and the measure of success which has been achieved, in language which we have already quoted. One test of the general condition of an oriental population lies in the number of petitions addressed to the highest authority; these have sunk from 4,074 in 1900 to 1,108 in 1905. The number of petitions having regard to slavery had fallen from 40 in 1902 to 16 in 1905, of which only one was a complaint of kidnapping. The Abyssinian frontier has been a centre of disturbance, but the destruction of the stronghold of the notorious slave raider, Ibrahim Wad Mahmoud, has had a most tranquillising effect on the country near Jerok, and the Barun tribe, on whom he had preyed continuously for years, now enjoys comparative rest.

The extracts from the reports of the Governors of the Provinces which are here given show a general advance in civilisation and in the condition of the people, though this varies in degree in the different provinces. In the

new province of the Blue Nile Major Dickinson refers to "indications of a satisfactory change in the state of native opinion on certain points. The riverain Arabs no longer rely so much as heretofore on slave labour. The new conditions are driving them to see the necessity, and to forget the supposed indignity, of personal work." So also the Batahin Arabs, who have long had a bad reputation as slave dealers, cattle and camel thieves, are learning that these practices now bring them into trouble. In the southern part of the remote province of Kordofan the wild and ignorant inhabitants are said "rather to enjoy a fight," and raids and inter-tribal fighting are common. The Governor, however, deprecates "a succession of punitive expeditions," while suggesting an increase in the military force. In other districts of Kordofan cultivation is increasing, flocks and herds have increased, and the people are taking to wearing clothes, but many "are much perturbed by the gradual loss of their slaves, on whose labour they were formerly dependent for almost everything."

In the Suakin province the chief event is the opening of the Nile-Red Sea Railway, and the choice of Port Soudan as terminus. Major Hawker writes:—

"I do not suppose that any person unacquainted with Suakin as it was when I first saw it, four years ago, could realise the extent to which everything has altered for the better since the railway works began. The conditions under which the people were living at the time of which I have spoken could scarcely have undergone a more remarkable change. Instead of enforced idleness and a dull market, there is general activity and brisk trade. Not only has regular employment been found for many who were without occupation, but still larger numbers have benefited indirectly by the making of the railway and the building of Port Soudan. Trade, which had left Suakin, has returned, and must rapidly improve. The general attitude is one of contentment, and there are signs on all sides of increasing prosperity."

The population of the Soudan is estimated at 1,853,000, which is in some degree a conjectural figure, as it has not been found possible to take a census of the country. Of this number, 2,787 are Europeans.

In his concluding summary, Lord Cromer remarks that the Government of the Soudan must of necessity be of a highly paternal character, but it is not all evils which can be remedied by Government action, and its interference should not be unduly extended. Above all, a sense of proportion should be maintained in the carrying out of measures of reform, for the field is very wide and the work of generations cannot be compressed into a few years.

"There must be no undue haste. The progress of the Soudan depends upon steady, continuous, unostentatious, and combined efforts along the lines of a well-defined policy, from which there should be no divergence."

SLAVE TRADING AT JEDDAH.

In a recent article in the *Morning Post* on Jeddah, the port of Mecca, and, as the writer calls it, "the gate of Islam," the writer, referring to the Consulates of the different European Powers, says :—

" The Consulates serve to prevent the indecency of an open slave market. Although it is denied that there is such a market to-day the trade exists and flourishes. Cargoes from Africa are run precariously and as a speculation. The slave trade from the interior of Arabia, on the other hand, is prosecuted unostentatiously either in markets outside the town or in the houses of brokers within the walls. Since the late revolt in the Yemen this trade has increased greatly, and the price of slaves has gone down. Families that were once well-to-do have had their homes destroyed and their lands ravaged, and as a consequence have sold their children. The man or woman for sale is usually a black, or what may be practically described as such, but at the present moment many in the market are of the very fair type. All honour is due to the Consuls who prevent an open slave market in Jeddah, but the limited authority which is theirs does not empower them to forbid similar practices outside the walls."

In Lord Cromer's report on Egypt for 1904, he spoke of the extreme difficulty of putting an entire stop to the traffic in slaves who are still smuggled from the Egyptian to the Turkish side of the Red Sea, but we know from last year's report that the Egyptian Slavery Department has succeeded in diminishing this trade, as well as that from the Arabian ports to Turkey.



Letters of Thomas Clarkson.

(Continued.)

THE meeting, for which the following letter was prepared, was the second annual meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society, held in Exeter Hall, on May 14th, 1841. According to the report in the *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, from 2,000 to 3,000 persons attended the meeting, in the belief that it was a party meeting called to oppose the Government in their proposed reduction of the sugar duties. On this the *Reporter* remarked :

"We see that the *Globe* and *Chronicle* also take up the idea that the meeting was got up by the Committee for a party purpose. These oracular gentlemen, if they really believe themselves, were never more mistaken. A sudden conjuncture of circumstances has made the influence of the anti-slavery party worth bidding for ; and all parties will have it that we have been, like themselves, at market. Already they must have been in part undeceived ; and we care not how soon they will open their eyes to what is an absolute fact, viz.,

that the anti-slavery Committee pursue a course of pure humanity, and are inaccessible to political considerations on either side. . . . What we most fervently hope is that the friends of the anti-slavery cause throughout the world will not suffer their excitement on a single topic to divert their attention or their interest from the various great and important objects which the Committee are assiduously, and, they trust, effectually pursuing."

At this meeting Mr. Wm. Allen, in the absence of the royal Duke of Sussex, was chairman, and among those who took part in it were Daniel O'Connell, Samuel Gurney and Edward North Buxton. Sir T. F. Buxton, Joseph John Gurney and Dr. Lushington sent apologies for absence. The meeting was somewhat excited and interruptions were frequent. It is evident that the question of the sugar duties was a burning one and caused differences of opinion even among anti-slavery men. The Committee, accused of being in open alliance with the "bread monopolists," defended the course which they had taken under the dictates of humanity and not from any political motives. The following letter from Clarkson was read by the Secretary :—

MR. CHAIRMAN, AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I am truly sorry that in consequence of the state of my health, and increasing age and infirmities, I have been deprived of the pleasure of attending the meeting which is to be held to-day, and of addressing you again. Last year I had the satisfaction of witnessing the delightful spectacle in this very place, of hundreds of persons, who, throwing aside their different religious and political distinctions, met together for the sole purpose of attempting to heal the wounds of suffering humanity; and this was the more honourable to them, as these poor sufferers were in distant lands, and known to them only by their misfortunes. But as this pleasure has been denied me, let me assure you, that my heart beats as warmly as ever in this sacred cause, and that I hope that this meeting also will manifest the same kind feelings towards it as were manifested in the preceding year.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I should be guilty of great injustice, knowing what has been done by your Committee in this work of love since your last meeting, were I not to tell you, that they have a title and claim, no ordinary title, to your confidence and support. They have laboured night and day, and I lament to say, some of them beyond their strength, so that in the short space of less than a year (to use a scripture expression with some qualification) "their sound has gone out into all lands, and their words unto the end of the world."

I cannot take my leave of you without earnestly entreating that you will continue your patronage to this Committee. Many can further the good cause by their purses, and all by their voices. There are very few who have not some friend or other, and if everyone here would make a point only of making his friend or neighbour acquainted with the subject, popular opinion would receive a great accession of strength. Nor let it be supposed that this is but of little consequence. The popular opinion of England can do much. It has done much already with its own Government, much with France, much with Germany, and not a little with America and elsewhere.

I have only to add my best wishes for the health and happiness of all those who are present at this meeting, with the hope that God may give His Blessing to the efforts they may each of them make, to promote this righteous cause.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Your Friend and Well-Wisher,

Playford Hall,
May the 10th, 1841.

THOMAS CLARKSON.

In March, 1841, Joseph Sturge—a name honoured and conspicuous in the annals of anti-slavery effort—paid a visit of some months to the United States, to advance the cause in America, where he was received with vilification by the pro-slavery Press of New York and stigmatised as "a notorious and violent abolitionist," of wild and incendiary designs. Thomas Clarkson felt the deepest interest in this journey and anxiety for Mr. Sturge's welfare. On July 3, 1841, he wrote:—

"It would appear that the Americans have been unsettled themselves and far from united as to our great question; and yet there wanted only some persons of abilities and character to bring them together. Such a man is Joseph Sturge. His soft and Christian manners, his firmness and decision in acting, and his superior intellect, fit him for this great task. I hope he will be preserved to accomplish his great work."

The letter which follows well illustrates the care which Clarkson bestowed on following up possible openings that might lead to the great end which was always before him. In the present instance, he eagerly seizes an opportunity for showing the evils of slavery in the French colonies in the West Indies, and placing the available evidence in suitable form before the French official investigator of the subject.

To J. H. TREDGOLD (*Secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society*).

DEAR MR. TREDGOLD,—I have received a letter from my Friend Mr. James Grahame, who resides at the City of Nantes in France, informing me that his Friend Mr. Conninck, a merchant at Havre, and a good Abolitionist, has been appointed by the King of France one of a Board of Commissioners to inquire and make a Report (for the Chambers I presume) about what would be the effect of the abolition of Slavery in the French Colonies—and that he (Mr. Conninck) wishes for information on the subject, on which to make a Report. In Mr. J. Grahame's letter to me, Mr. Conninck has written a few lines with his own hand to me stating that he has been appointed such a Commissioner, and wishes that I would send him some of the best books on the subject to his own residence. . . .

I may now state that I am suffering so much from excruciating wounds in my feet, and am otherwise so ill, that I do not know whether I can get through this very letter, or whether I can make myself intelligible, but the subject is of so much importance, that I dare not delay writing till I should feel a little better. It rejoices my heart to find that M. Guizot continues faithful to his word, and that a Report is soon to appear on the subject of abolition by France. It will be our fault if that Report should be against us, when we are

invited to take a part in furnishing materials to frame it. You will observe the hint which Mr. Conninck gives us as to the sort of intelligence which he wants. No statement, he fears (he is a good French Protestant) will have any effect in France, which shows the religious improvement of the Negroes (which would be to us the highest recommendation) or which has anything of religion mixed with it, but wholly what is political, economical, or expedient. We must therefore confine ourselves to this point—we must tell him such things as these—that it has been now practically and fully ascertained, that one free man will do double the work he would have done in slavery; that free labour is cheaper than slave-labour; that estates have risen in value; that the slave's condition has been so much bettered, that he can now afford to lay out double or treble the money he used to do in finery, in clothes, etc., so that our Exports have been increased to the great advantage of our Manufacturers—and the same would be the case with the Manufacturers of France were slavery abolished. This latter argument, I know, would have great influence in France. At the same time that these, and other such political arguments, would be held out by us, it would surely have some little effect to say, that the Negroes were changed as to character, and that crime had diminished among them, and that there was a good feeling towards their employers, instead of hatred and a revengeful spirit. But to come directly to the course to be pursued, I suggest to you whether it would not be advisable that you should send Mr. Conninck my letter to the clergy of America, which you lately printed and sent there. It contains a short, very short account of some of the advantages of emancipation. . . . Excuse me for saying that you should take your pen and mark, all the way down, with ink, the pages . . . where the subject is discussed, and which are to be read. By this you lead him directly to the spot which is interesting to him, you save him time and trouble. I would advise you also to send him Mr. J. J. Gurney's book. In this book there are many, many pages, which are irrelevant, pages on which there is poetry, pages in which he observes the beauty of places, pages on plants, trees, and flowers, etc. Now to a foreigner, who understands perhaps but very little English, it would be a grievous trouble to have to look over all these useless paragraphs before he could find out what he is really to read. I think, therefore, that you should take up your pen, and mark in Mr. Gurney's book, those pages only which it is necessary for him to know. If there be any other book which you know of, which can give Mr. Conninck light on the subject, you will send it to him, marked in the same manner. And here I may observe what a providential thing it appears to me that Mr. Conninck should have been directed to me on this great subject, for instead of having the French Commissioner's Report, made up by ignorant, giddy, unfeeling Frenchmen, we may get it made up from our own books, if we avail ourselves of this opportunity. Nay, I would even go farther than this, to avail ourselves of the offer now made to us. I would advise that the Committee should be called, and that they should consider whether it would not be desirable to prevail upon Mr. J. Gurney, or Mr. Scoble, or some other proper person to go over in person with the books to Mr. Conninck's own house at Havre . . . taking a letter from me. I do think this opportunity should be made the most of. If the report of the French Commissioners should be against us I should sink into despair. If it should be with us, and slavery abolished by the French, Cuba could not but

follow—and if Cuba followed (which the Americans dread the most of all events) I believe that the United States must follow also; but, my Friend, I am too ill and too much exhausted to now write more, and I fear that what I have already written can hardly be understood by you. I entreat you then to let me know by return of post that you have received this letter, and what you intend to do. Do not keep me long in suspense. I must write (if I should live to write another letter) both to Mr. Grahame and to Mr. Conninck himself, but I cannot write to them till I know what you mean to say to them. . . .

I am, dear Mr. Tredgold,

Very sincerely yours,

THOMAS CLARKSON.

Playford, December 1, 1841.

British East Africa.

In a paper on the East Africa Protectorate recently read by Sir Charles Eliot before the Royal Colonial Institute, the former Commissioner made some instructive remarks on the relations of Englishmen with the African races:—

“I think we may, without undue national complacency, congratulate ourselves on getting on well with most African races, and better than other European Powers. We have certainly asserted our influence inland in a far more practical manner than the Italians and Portuguese, who have made little effort to advance beyond the coast, and we seem on the whole to meet with fewer difficulties and less serious rebellions than the Germans. The Germans are great systematisers, whereas Africans have a very feeble sense of order and discipline, and at best yield only a personal obedience. It would seem that our flexible and easy-going methods are less irksome to them than the minute and rigorous regulations of our neighbours. To this may be added a special circumstance which is probably responsible for much of the trouble which Germans have had with natives, namely, their habit of putting stations, and indeed large districts, in the charge of non-commissioned officers. It would appear that while German officers compare favourably in education and general standing with the English officers occupying corresponding positions, the non-commissioned officers are more inclined to violence and are less inclined to take a friendly interest in natives than Englishmen of the same class.

PUNITIVE EXPEDITIONS.

“The point in our own relations with natives which is most open to criticism is our fondness for little wars, generally called punitive expeditions. Some of these, no doubt, are inevitable, but it is certain that the majority of military officers go out to Africa in the hope of seeing active service, and that the younger and more energetic civilians are not averse to such experiences. The offence which provokes these reprisals is generally a murder or some other crime, and it is perhaps not always sufficiently considered whether a fine, which in many cases, at any rate, could be levied without military operations, would not be an adequate punishment.”

NATIVE LABOUR.

Speaking of the supply of native labour, which Sir Charles Eliot considers moderately satisfactory, he said :—

“ As is well known, the Africans, though possessed of considerable physical strength, are as a race very averse to work. There are degrees of laziness, but as a rule all natives of East Africa are disinclined to undertake any labour which is not necessitated by their immediate wants. Such motives as making money or of improving their position affect them very slightly. They will plant what is required for their subsistence, and show considerable diligence in cultivation ; but a plentiful crop is often followed by a famine, because the moment the natives have any surplus store they cease to sow or make provision for the future.

“ It is perhaps too early to predict what effect contact with Europeans may have in developing the minds and increasing the industry of natives. In Uganda the results are most gratifying both as regards the spread of education and the assimilation of material civilisation. But this race is conspicuously superior to its neighbours, and the East Africa Protectorate cannot point to similar results even in places where missions have been established for more than fifty years.

“ The most encouraging sign is the great increase of native labour on the Uganda railway. . . . At present the railway employs only 1,200 Indians, but 3,000 Africans. These are all in the direct service of the line, but including those who work for contractors probably about 6,000 Africans are employed, mostly from the Kikuyu and Ukamba districts. The quality of the labour is said to be satisfactory, and these statistics certainly encourage one to take a hopeful view of native labour questions.”



The French Congo.

M. DESCHANEL, President of the French Parliamentary Committee for Foreign Affairs and the Colonies, recently delivered an interesting speech, reported by the Paris correspondent of *The Times*, in which he surveyed the general foreign and colonial situation.

Respecting the Congo, M. Deschanel said that they ought to strengthen the control over the concessionary companies, in order to see that the conditions were strictly observed, particularly as far as concerned the reconstitution of the indiarubber reserves, and to provide for certain omissions in the regulation of native labour, the shortening of engagements, the prohibition of barbarous punishments, and the development of currency by paying salaries no longer in goods but in cash, which would render possible the levying of taxes in coin. Everything must be done to suppress the carriage of loads on the head, which was an odious form of labour resembling a

remnant of slavery. Hygienic and medical assistance must also be provided for. In exchange for taxation they owed the native population relief from the evils which were decimating them. A humane policy towards the natives was the only one worthy of the civilising rôle of France.

Contract Labour in Assam.

THE evils attendant on the penal contract labour system in the tea-gardens of Assam have been not infrequently pointed out in the *Anti-Slavery Reporter*. We are very glad to learn from a letter addressed by the Secretary for India to the Indian Committee of the Humanitarian League that the Government of India in February last issued orders appointing a Committee to inquire into the working of the Act of 1901 in the Upper Assam Valley, and announced their definite decision to withdraw the Act from certain districts of Lower Assam, viz., the Surma Valley and the districts of Goalpara and Kamrup.

The Native Problem in the United States.

THE following account of the first annual Meeting of the "Georgia Equal Rights' Association," held at Macon in February last, and attended by 200 coloured delegates from different districts of the State of Georgia, was recently given in *The Times* :—

The delegates, who claim to speak on behalf of over 1,000,000 coloured inhabitants of Georgia, have issued an address, in which they declare that, although the relationship of master and slave as between the white and coloured races no longer exists, the black population continues to be socially and politically oppressed. Of the State school funds 80 per cent. are applied for the benefit of the white children, despite the fact that the white and black school populations are nearly equal in numbers. In the matter of grants for technical and especially agricultural, training the negroes are at a similar disadvantage. Labour contracts, moreover, are so framed that the coloured farm labourer is practically reduced to a condition of slavery, and the number of coloured emigrants from Georgia to the North and West is increasing in consequence. Nevertheless, in spite of many disabilities, the representatives of the coloured race in Georgia pay taxes on more than £3,600,000 worth of property. In view of the increase in the value of taxable property in coloured hands an extension

of the right of Parliamentary representation is demanded. The address further appeals for "the abolition of 'jim-crow' cars on railroads, and the substitution of first and second class cars, which would separate men according to condition, and not according to colour." More stringent legislation against lynching, and the right of serving in the Militia and on juries is also asked for in the address, which concludes with the following appeal:—"Brethren of the white race, living together as we do, let us be friends and not enemies. Let us not stir up the darker, fiercer passions. Let us strive together, not as master and slave, but as man and man, equal in the sight of God and in the eye of the law, eager to make this historic State a land of peace, a place of plenty, and an abode of Jesus Christ."

Reviews.

A MODERN SLAVERY,* by Henry W. Nevinson.

WE have already referred at some length to Mr. Nevinson's very striking articles, as they appeared in *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, on his travels in Angola and the Portuguese islands of San Thomé and Principe. These have now been re-published in book form under the above title.

Mr. Nevinson states in his preface that in choosing that particular part of Africa for investigation he was guided by the advice of the Aborigines Protection and the Anti-Slavery Societies, and his mission has had noteworthy results, if it has only led to the publication of this remarkable book, with its simple, yet terrible, revelation of a flourishing present-day system of slavery. We cannot believe that the matter will end here.

Mr. Nevinson reminds us that :

"The whole question of slavery is still before us. It has reappeared under the more pleasing names of 'indentured labour,' 'contract labour,' or 'compulsory labour.' . . . The whole thing will have to be faced anew, for the solutions of our great-grandfathers no longer satisfy. While slavery is lucrative, as it is on the islands of San Thomé and Principe, it will be defended by those who identify greatness with wealth, and if their own wealth is involved, their arguments will gain considerably in vigour. They will point to the necessity of developing rich islands where no one would work without compulsion. They will point to what they call the comfort and good treatment of the slaves. They will protect themselves behind legal terms. But they forget that legal terms make no difference to the truth of things. They forget that slavery is not a matter of discomfort or ill-treatment, but of loss of liberty. They forget that it might be better for mankind that the islands should go back to wilderness than that a single slave should toil there. I know the contest is still before us. It

* Harper & Bros., London and New York.

is but part of the great contest with capitalism, and in Africa it will be as long and difficult as it was a hundred years ago in other regions of the world."

Herein the great value of the book consists, that it unmasks a plausible system of "contract labour" of long standing, and describes in plain terms the old-fashioned slave trade along the well-worn route from the interior to the coast, which, checked and diminished for a time, is now, as Mr. Nevinson believes, fast recovering from a temporary shock and is increasing again every month.

It may be remembered that over three years ago the Anti-Slavery Society received a letter through the Portuguese Legation in London, in which it was stated that "Portugal may justly boast of having completely suppressed the wicked traffic (in slaves), which nowadays only has an existence in the imagination of certain philanthropists." We were assured, too, that there could be no ground for charges of slavery, which the Government "repelled, as absolutely destitute of foundation."

It is true that, as Mr. Nevinson explains, the Government goes through a form of "redeeming" the slaves before they are converted into "contract labourers" for San Thomé. But this is "a hypocritical fiction"—to use Mr. Nevinson's words—of the thinnest kind.

Between "slaves" before their redemption and "contracted labourers" after it—

"No one in heaven or on earth can see the smallest difference, but by the change of name Portugal stifles the enfeebled protests of nations like the English, and by the excuse of law she smooths her conscience and whitens over one of the blackest crimes which even Africa can show."

"Everyone here knows," he writes, "that the people whom the Government buys and 'redeems' have been torn from their homes and families on purpose to be 'redeemed'; that but for the purchases by the Government agents for San Thomé the whole slave traffic would fall to pieces; and that the actual condition of these 'contracted labourers' upon the islands does not differ from slavery in any point of importance."

The value of official Portuguese assurances like those of 1903, quoted above, may, in the light of these facts, be fairly estimated. It is some satisfaction to know that the British Foreign Office is in possession of the truth, and that, as was stated in Parliament a week or two since, our Government awaits a report from Consul Nightingale, who has recently paid a visit of inquiry to the islands of San Thomé and Principe.

We hope and believe that Mr. Nevinson's book will do something to enlighten that large class of people who are comfortably settled in their conviction that "there is no slavery now."

LADY LUGARD ON NORTHERN NIGERIA.

In the bulky volume entitled *A Tropical Dependency*,* Lady Lugard opens up an obscure subject by investigating the history of the more westerly portion of the vast and mysterious district of tropical Africa known by the general name of the Soudan, and the civilisations which have existed there. Lady Lugard has consulted original manuscripts and translations of Arab historians for the earlier portion of her account, which she suggests may serve "rather as a basis for future criticism than for the permanent purposes of history." Of the black Kingdom of Ghana, already famous in the 8th century, not even the exact locality is known, but it carried on important trade relations with the North. Later on came the Moslem conquest, and the foundation of the empire of Melle, "the first of the great black Mohammedan Kingdoms of the Western Soudan to claim intercourse on equal terms with contemporary civilisation." With the discoveries of Vasco da Gama at the end of the 15th century, and the closing of the Northern ports of Africa to Christian intercourse, came a change in the way of approach to West Africa, which had previously been from the North, but was now from the South by sea. For about four hundred years the commercial relations of Europe with the Soudan were restricted to the coast belt, and were confined mainly to trade in gold, ivory and slaves. In the Songhay Empire, which succeeded that of Melle, the black civilisation attained the greatest height which it had ever reached in Modern Africa, "the gentle nature of the Soudanese blacks" having, in Lady Lugard's words, allied itself in the Songhay race with the virility of the Arab. Then followed the Moorish conquest of the Soudan, and by the end of the 16th century the races of the Soudan had entirely lost touch with the civilised world, and "the mystery of Africa" closed around them for three hundred years.

A never-failing supply of wealth, which seems to have persisted throughout the history of the Soudan, was the slave labour raided from the south. The Mohammedan blacks regarded these "inferior races" as having no rights, but beyond the cruelty of the raids, the slaves do not appear to have been ill-treated; they were looked upon much as domestic animals.

The early history of European intercourse with the Soudan is anything but creditable, and English trade with West Africa may be said to have begun with the slave raiding expeditions of Sir John Hawkins in the latter half of the 16th century. The history of West African coast trade in the 18th century is a history mainly of slave trading. It will be remembered that a special contract known as the Assiento Contract was inserted in the Treaty of Utrecht, in 1712, securing to Great Britain the sole right of supplying the Spanish South American Colonies with slaves. The victims of the trade, the natives of the coast, were for the most part of a very low order

* London, J. Nisbet & Co.

of humanity, and the traders, whether English, Portuguese, Danish or Dutch, were generally men of broken fortunes and vicious character.

It is not necessary here to refer to the well-known barbarities and cruelties of the over-sea trade on which Lady Lugard touches. But it is well that European nations should not forget how long and heavy is the record of wrongs done to Africa which stands against them, and, as she reminds us:—

“It was only very gradually that the conscience of humanity revolted against a means of making profit so opposed to every conception of freedom and justice. . . . The slave trade was abolished, at least in name, in 1807. It was unfortunately far from being abolished in fact, and the greater part of the 19th century saw unavailing efforts made by European governments to put an end to the exportation of slaves from Africa by sea.”

Lady Lugard proceeds to trace the events which led to the formation of the Royal Niger Company, and the foundation of the present Protectorate of Northern Nigeria. From the date of the abolition of the slave trade, the constant policy of the British Government was to avoid meddling with native affairs and incurring political responsibilities on the West Coast. In 1865 a strong Committee of the House of Commons sat to investigate West African affairs, and reported that as the slave trade, the suppression of which was the chief object of the British establishments in West Africa, was rapidly diminishing, all further extension of territory, or assumption of government, or treaties with native tribes, would be inexpedient, and the object should be rather to transfer administration of all the governments to natives, with a view to ultimate withdrawal from all, except probably Sierra Leone.

But it was not long before the “Scramble for Africa” began. French and British interests came into conflict in West Africa, and in 1884 Great Britain assumed a Protectorate over the coast near the mouth of the river Niger, under the name of the Oil Rivers Protectorate. The National African Company, which had for some years been engaged in active commercial enterprise under Sir George (then Mr.) Taubman-Goldie, gradually extended its operations into the interior, where it had to contend with France and Germany as rivals, and in 1886 the Company was granted a charter as the Royal Niger Company.

In 1894 Captain Lugard first came upon the scene in West Africa by conducting an expedition into Borgu, at a time when it was said that England, France and Germany were devoting themselves to “a veritable steeplechase” in order to gain the Bend of the Niger. Captain Lugard won the race for Great Britain, and a strained situation with France followed, which was fortunately ended by the Anglo-French agreement of 1898.

Later on, the territories of the Company were divided, a part being included with the Oil Rivers Protectorate under Southern Nigeria, while the

interior, cut off from the sea, became the separate Protectorate of Northern Nigeria. In 1900 the transfer of the Protectorate to the Crown took place, General Lugard becoming the first High Commissioner.

The rule of the Fulani, which preceded the British administration, was marked, as we know, by perpetual slave raiding which precluded all possibility of peaceful and prosperous development. Slave raiding was necessary for supplying the trade, and of this great curse of equatorial Africa, Lady Lugard gives a vivid account:—

“The view of the Mohammedan or of the higher class pagan with regard to the practice of raiding for slaves, would seem to have been almost identical with that of the Spaniards and Portuguese at the time of the discovery of the East and West Indies. Inferior races of a different faith did not count in the ranks of free human beings. They were little better than cattle, and as such might be hunted and taken without any derogation from the laws of humanity. . . . In general the slaves of Negroland would seem to have been governed with tolerant good-humour. Their sufferings were not directly intentional, but were incidental to the barbarities of the slave-raid, by which whole villages were destroyed, and to the horrors of transit on foot across the desert.

Were it not that human remains are destructible, the caravan route from Tripoli to Haussaland would be paved deep with human bones.”

As the authoress truly says, the imagination quails before the thought of the sufferings which this road, which was used for the same cruel purpose for perhaps as many as 19 centuries before Christ, has witnessed.

The raids, which were habitually directed against natives of a different religion and therefore regarded as of an inferior order, have perhaps produced even more human suffering, than the slave marches, for it was a relatively small surplus only which experienced the pains of the desert journey for the purposes of exportation.

“But, though relatively small it was numerically great, and the sum of misery inflicted by the slave-hunts of countless generations defies all computation.”

We question whether, as regards “the sum of misery,” there is much to choose between the “brutality of the slave-raider” and the “despotism of the slave-owner.” Both were rife in West Africa.

Here is an extract which Lady Lugard quotes from an account given by Dr. Barth, who accompanied the Bornu forces in a slave-raid against the Musgu natives in 1851-2. The army marched, burning and destroying as it went. One day Dr. Barth reports:—

“A large number of slaves had been caught this day. Altogether they were said to have taken a thousand, and there were certainly not less than five hundred. To our utmost horror not less than one hundred and seventy full-grown men were mercilessly slaughtered in cold blood, the greater part of them

being allowed to bleed to death, a leg having been severed from the body. On other occasions, the whole day's spoil was limited to a handful of slaves, unfortunate creatures whom sickness or ill-advised courage prevented from leaving their native villages."

The writer goes on to describe the "heartrending scenes" caused by the division of children from their parents, and the reckless waste of life, and destruction of property, which characterised the whole proceeding.

Such incidents, as Lady Lugard remarks, "illustrate vividly the absolute incompatibility of slave-raiding with the maintenance of civilised government in the country raided," but between 1851 and the introduction of British authority into the country, slave-raiding had become general throughout Northern Nigeria.

This then, as is well-known, has been one of the worst evils which General Lugard has had to fight. The task is anything but a simple one, for slavery is recognised by the law of Islam and property in slaves is, to the Mohammedan, a very real form of property.

Lady Lugard writes :—

"The fact has to be faced by the administrator in Mohammedan Africa that the abolition of slavery is not a straightforward task of beneficence. It carries with it grave and undeniable disadvantages to the slaves, as well as to their owners, and the objections urged against it by the local rulers and employers are not by any means without foundation. . . .

"It has to be remembered, also, that in countries where all industries are based on slave labour, slave power takes the place which steam and electric power take in the West. It cannot be suddenly abolished without a universal dislocation of industrial life. Slavery is at present the only form of labour contract known in many districts of Northern Nigeria, and before it can be done away with, time is needed for other forms of labour contract to be substituted."

DOMESTIC SLAVERY.

These facts often lead to a belief that the institution of domestic slavery is one which must be upheld in Africa. Lady Lugard combats this doctrine in vigorous terms :—

"In opposition to such a view there is the simple logic of the fact that slavery cannot be maintained without a supply of slaves acquired under all the horrors of slave-raids, and transported with great suffering and loss of life from their original homes. The evils of this system, whether they are considered from a humane or simply from an economic and administrative point of view, do not need to be insisted upon. For this reason alone slavery must stand condemned in any society which aspires to civilisation. But there is also a second aspect in which slavery as an institution is opposed to the march of progress. It keeps a very large portion of the population in a state of tutelage, in which the individual is not held responsible for his acts. This, in my

husband's opinion, is the reason why Mohammedan Africa, which readily reaches a higher state of civilisation than the black pagan territories, does not progress beyond a certain point. It is too heavily weighted by the irresponsible multitudes who are not concerned with, and do not directly contribute towards, public life. This from the administrative point of view is very undesirable."

We quote Lady Lugard's lucid description of the abolition of the legal status of slavery, a step which is taken in British Protectorates where it is not yet found possible altogether to forbid the existing condition of domestic slavery.

ABOLITION OF THE LEGAL STATUS.

"In Northern Nigeria the value of the immediate abolition of slave-raiding and slave-trading need not be discussed. There is no voice that would be raised in humane society in favour of the maintenance of these institutions. The abolition of the legal status of slavery has an effect in two ways. It is different from the abolition of slavery. It means only that the law as administered in British courts does not recognise the existence of slaves, and that property in persons as slaves is not admitted. It is not forbidden to a native to hold slaves so long as the master and slave are mutually satisfied, but the slave can at any time assert his freedom if he wishes to do so. Under this system emancipation is gradual, and the value of it is that, without dislocating the whole machinery of labour in the Protectorate, it gives to the individual slave the power to change his condition if he pleases. This is the first and obvious use. The second effect is no less useful. It tends to lessen the value of property in slaves by the fact that no one is a slave any longer than he chooses to remain one, and that property in slaves is not property in the eyes of British law. This, combined with the increasing difficulty and expense of obtaining slaves in consequence of the abolition of the slave-trade and slave-raid, will have the natural economic effect of preventing the investment of money in slave property. Thus, by pressure of circumstance, without abolition, and without compensation, the slave-owner will gradually cease to exist."

The transition period is one which has its peculiar difficulties, and the principle which Lady Lugard enunciates, that the machinery of freedom should not be hastened, but should be left to work slowly, is, within limits, true enough, but is very open to exaggeration and abuse, as we have seen and still see in East Africa.

Within the last 25 years we have acquired, as this book reminds us, in tropical Africa alone, territories of which the area exceeds by one-half the whole of British India. Among the many difficult problems which have to be solved in Africa none is greater than that of labour. As Lady Lugard well expresses it, the task is—

"to construct a bridge between the old system of civilisation and the new, by finding means to organise as free labour the labour which preceding generations could only use enslaved. . . . We must study with an open mind the thorny questions of native labour. . . . Our fathers, by a self-

denying ordinance, did what they could to set the subject populations free. . . . But the actual enjoyment of freedom is still far from the African native. If we could realise the dream of abolition by carrying freedom to every village, and so direct our administration that under it the use of liberty would be learned, we should be filling a place that any nation might be proud to hold in the annals of civilisation."

ADDRESS IN BOW CHURCH.

By the invitation of the Rector (Rev. A. W. Hutton), an address was given on June 22nd by the Secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society in the Church of St. Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside, on the subject of present-day slavery.

The address was one of a series arranged to be given on behalf of various philanthropic societies at the one o'clock service at the Church on Fridays in June and July, illustrating "The Claims of Humanitarianism on the Christian Conscience."

[A large, stylized, handwritten letter 'N' is written across the page, likely a mark or signature.]